

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of November 25, 2013**

- I. ROLL CALL.** Select Board Chair John Quinn III, Selectmen Chris Bradley, Brad Denny, Matthew Gadbois, and Kenneth W. Goslant. Also present were Town Manager Rob Lewis, Acting Clerk Ken McCann, Lawton Rutter (Northfield EMS), Melissa Rutter (Northfield EMS), Steven Tiersch (Northfield EMS), Lynn Doney (Northfield EMS), Laurie Beth Putnam (Northfield EMS), Sonya Bourne, and Kathleen Lott (*Northfield News*).

Chair Quinn called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** The Board members and the public were asked to rise and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

- III. SET/ADJUST AGENDA.** There were no changes to the posted agenda.

- IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None.

- V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. November 12, 2013 (Joint Board Meeting).** Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Bradley, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

- VI. APPROVAL OF BILLS**

- a. Warrant #11-14.** Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Bradley, to approve Warrant #11-14 in the amount of \$239,934.96. Selectman Bradley asked if use of ArcView (and its maintenance cost) is regularly shared amongst the Listers' Office, the Zoning Office, and Management Support. Manager Lewis confirmed that it was. Selectman Gadbois asked about a heating fuel delivery of less than two (2) gallons to the Town Garage. Manager Lewis explained that the Town's contract with Gillespie Fuels includes regular heating fuel deliveries; the relatively warm weather this past fall meant that the fuel tank was nearly full when the delivery vehicle came by mid-October. Selectman Gadbois asked why hose ends, etc. had to be installed on the relatively new excavator. Manager Lewis noted that this equipment had been well used this past summer. Selectman Gadbois asked if the shot rock and plant mix recently purchased had been picked up by the Highway Department or been delivered by the seller. Manager Lewis said that some had been picked up but most of it had been delivered by Pike Industries from their Williamstown gravel pit. Selectman Gadbois would prefer that the Town dealt with a more local supplier. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

- b. Approval of Bi-Weekly Payroll through November 10, 2013.** Motion by Selectman Bradley, seconded by Selectman Gadbois, to approve the bi-weekly payroll in the amount of \$55,299.54. Given the recent Board inquiries regarding Northfield Police Department (NPD) overtime and part-time officer expenses, Manager Lewis had asked NPD Chief James Dziobek to provide a written explanation for these expenditures for this payroll period. Selectman Bradley was grateful for this report but asked why an officer who had taken sick time was still eligible for overtime pay. Manager Lewis stated that this was part of the NPD's union contract; sick time counts towards total work hours for the week. Selectman Gadbois would like future reports reformatted to show how the work shifts were staffed.

Manager Lewis added that he has instituted a new requirement that when officers appear in court, it will be done during their regular work hours (not overtime). Selectman Denny is pleased to hear that these changes are being made to reduce overtime expenses. Manager Lewis then noted that although NPD currently has a sufficient number of full-time officers, there now is a need to re-advertise for additional part-time officers since some of ours have taken jobs with other local departments. Chair Quinn asked if the rise in Northfield Ambulance Service (NAS) part-time expenses was the direct result of NAS Supervisor James Baraw being out on disability. Manager Lewis said that this was one of the reasons. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

VII. SELECT BOARD

- a. **Bond Anticipation Note (Depot Square Roadway Reconstruction): \$330,000 at 1.55% interest.** Manager Lewis stated that although this loan was taken out in the Town's name (since federal grant monies are involved) the Village is fully responsible for its repayment. Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to approve and sign the Bond Anticipation Note (Non-Revolving Line of Credit) in the amount of \$330,000; to approve and sign the Bond Anticipation Borrowing Resolution; and to approve and sign the Bond Anticipation Borrowing Tax Certificate. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
- b. **Northfield Snowmobilers Inc. (NSI) Trail Request (South View Drive & Fairground Road).** Manager Lewis said this is the annual request from NSI to connect its snowmobile trail by operating for a short distance on South View Drive and at the end of Fairground Road. There have been no issues in the past related to this permission. Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Bradley, to approve this request and authorize Chair Quinn to sign the Landowner Permission Form. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
- c. **Authorization for NAS Purchase of New Cardiac Monitor (i.e., Defibrillator), etc.** Lawton Rutter, who is the Acting NAS Supervisor in Mr. Baraw's absence, had provided a written summary of his recommendation that the Board authorize the purchase of a refurbished Zoll E Series Cardiac Monitor, a SurePower Charging Station, a refurbished AutoPulse (cardiac support pump), six (6) Lithium-ion batteries, and a charger for the AutoPulse. Although the estimated list price of this equipment is about \$47,000, Mr. Rutter worked with Zoll Medical Corporation to find "significantly discounted" prices: with trade-ins, all this equipment can be purchased for \$20,403.40. Mr. Rutter also explained that the lead acid batteries used by the current equipment (which was already scheduled for replacement in 2017) have limited shelf life and cost about \$1500 per year to replace. The new equipment will use Lithium-ion batteries that hold a charge much longer and will not need to be replaced as frequently. The purchase cost will be paid in installments and mostly covered by existing NAS funds in the CIP accounts for this defibrillator replacement, uniforms, and the copier in the NAS office. Any deficit will be made up with anticipated funds in the NAS 2014/2015 CIP account. Selectman Gadbois is concerned that CIP funds that were intended for the copier and uniforms are being used for a different purpose. Manager Lewis stated that the copier now is on a lease agreement and that NAS members were supplied recently with new uniforms. As these CIP accounts were not designated by the taxpayers, leftover funds can be used for any purpose.

Selectman Goslant then asked if the defibrillator was fully portable. Mr. Rutter confirmed that it was; with this battery system, it can be brought in homes. Selectman Bradley asked if there was a warranty on the equipment. Mr. Rutter stated that the warranty periods for the equipment were either six (6) months or one (1) year. The defibrillator also will be maintained under a Zoll maintenance contract and should last about ten (10) years. Motion by Selectman Bradley, seconded by Selectman Gadbois, to authorize the purchase of a refurbished Zoll E Series Cardiac Monitor and associated equipment for \$20,403.40 using CIP funds. **Motion passed 5-0-0.** Selectman Bradley thanked Mr. Rutter for his outstanding presentation.

- d. **Municipal Website Redesign.** Chair Quinn noted that a redesign/upgrade of the municipal website had been discussed at this summer's Joint Board Retreat and he would like some action on this to see what will be required. Selectman Bradley volunteered to work with the various departments and municipal staff to determine what should be included. Chair Quinn would like to see what new features could be incorporated, such as paying bills by credit card, etc.
- e. **Joint Board Meeting: Monday, December 9, 2013.** The next Joint Board Meeting will begin that night at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room.
- f. **Status Reports: Various Projects**
 - 1. **Town Highway Subcommittee.** Selectman Gadbois had prepared a report from the last subcommittee meeting that denoted how many hours had been put on the new excavator, loader, etc.
 - 2. **Sale of Old Excavator Hammer.** At the last meeting (11/12/13), there was a discussion regarding the sale of this old equipment but action was tabled until more information could be obtained. Selectman Goslant has since learned that there already is some interest in its purchase. Chair Quinn would like to have the hammer priced so that the Town could be more certain of getting its true value.
 - 3. **Northfield Ambulance Volunteers, Inc. (NAVI) 15th Annual Tree and Wreath Sale.** Chair Quinn noted that NAVI will be selling Christmas trees and wreaths at the NAS Bay again this year starting on Saturday, November 30, 2013 and through Christmas Eve. Free delivery is available.

VIII. MANAGER'S REPORT

- a. **Status Reports: Various Projects.** Manager Lewis did not submit a written report for this meeting but said that he has spent "99.99%" of his time over the past two weeks on budget matters, union negotiations, and Fairground Bridge. He will make every effort to have something in writing for the next meeting. He then provided brief updates.
 - 1. **FY 2013/2014 Budget Process.** Manager Lewis reported that a first draft of the combined Town/Village budget has been completed. He would like to begin scheduling budget meetings starting in early December. He would like to know if the Board members would prefer to hold these meetings with all Town Selectmen and Village Trustees present and go over the proposed budget line-by-line or if they would rather have the Boards appoint subcommittees to review it and then present recommendations. He anticipates at least two (2) meetings each week so that the budget can be formally approved by the end of January 2014. Chair Quinn noted that it was the Village Trustees that first brought up the idea of subcommittees performing an initial review. He believes that the other Town Selectmen will agree with his preference to have full Board review of each line item.

Selectman Bradley also would like to provide his own input on every item. Selectman Denny felt that should the Village Trustees care not to attend every meeting (especially those regarding the emergency services), there would be a quorum of the two Boards present should all five (5) Town Selectmen be in attendance.

Selectman Goslant definitely would like to go over the budget line by line. He would like it made clear to the taxpayers throughout the process how and why their money is disbursed. During the upcoming discussion of the combined highway budget, Selectman Goslant also would like to revisit the possibility of contracting out winter maintenance of some of the backroads. He felt that there should be an investigation beforehand of the various plow routes to determine how much they actually cost the Town and whether it would be cost-effective to hire someone else to do them. Selectman Goslant believes that roadside mowing is another task that could be hired out. In addition, given all the new NAS equipment recently authorized for purchase, he felt that the Town should be looking seriously into expanding ambulance revenues. In addition, Northfield could begin to reduce Northfield Fire Department (NFD) expenditures by relying more on Mutual Aid assistance. Similarly, he believed NPD expenses could be reduced by cutting down on patrol time. Since this will be a combined Town/Village budget for the first time, Selectman Goslant felt that this was a good time to look hard at areas where there could be reductions in equipment purchases, etc. For example, there needs to be a determination on whether the Town should have its own street sweeper, whether leaf collection really is the Town's responsibility, etc. These questions should be answered before merger goes into effect. Selectman Goslant felt that the proposed co-location of the emergency services was an important part of controlling future expenses. Chair Quinn thanked Selectman Goslant for his suggestions.

Selectman Bradley asked if Vermont Local Roads had submitted its report on Northfield's plow routes. Manager Lewis replied that this report had been delayed time and again; he will send another reminder. Selectman Bradley now doubts that the report will be as complete as originally advertised. Selectman Denny is hopeful that the Town Selectmen and Village Trustees will be able to work together effectively as this combined budget is developed.

2. **Town Union Negotiations.** Selectman Denny asked if Manager Lewis could report any timeline for resolving this ongoing matter. Manager Lewis stated that the Town had made its final offer to the union representatives and now is waiting to hear back.

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Non-agenda items. There was none.

X. ADJOURNMENT. Motion by Selectman Gadbois, seconded by Selectman Denny, to adjourn. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

The Board adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth L. McCann

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk

These minutes are subject to approval at the next regular meeting.

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Town Manager's Office.